

# **AMERICAN WARRIOR, INCORPORATED INTERSTATE SURFACE GAS PIPELINE PROJECT**

## **RIGHT-OF-WAY GRANT APPLICATIONS UTU-79053 & COC-65734**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NUMBER: UT-080-2002-91**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

American Warrior, Incorporated (American Warrior) filed an application for a right-of-way (R/W) grant for a surface, four inch diameter, steel, unpainted, natural gas pipeline which, if approved, would be installed, operated and maintained across public land located within Rio Blanco County, Colorado and Uintah County, Utah.

The affected Utah and Colorado field offices of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) have assigned this application case file serial numbers COC-65734 & UTU-79053; the former for the Colorado portion and the latter for the Utah portion of this natural gas pipeline project.

### **2. PURPOSE AND NEED**

The proposed surface natural gas pipeline is needed by American Warrior to transport natural gas produced from four natural gas wells, located in Sec. 36, T. 3 N., R. 104 W., and Sec(s). 1, 2, and 3, T. 2 N., R. 104 W., Rio Blanco County, Colorado, to an existing natural gas gathering pipeline located in Sec. 3, T. 9 S., R. 25 E., Uintah County, Utah. These natural gas wells are presently shut-in.

American Warrior acquired approximately 8,500 feet of existing buried gas pipeline(s) that service these wells and which at one time tied-into Northwest Pipeline Company's (NWP) pipeline in Sec. 2, T. 2 N., R. 104 W. Higher gas prices have increased the desire to produce and transport gas from these wells and thereby generate profits for the operator. NWP would not accept gas from these wells because their pipeline has changed from a gas gathering pipeline to a finished products transportation pipeline. Due to this situation, American Warrior filed their application for a surface, four inch diameter, natural gas pipeline.

### **3. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

#### **3.1 Proposed Pipeline Route and Alternative Pipeline Routes**

American Warrior proposes three different routes referred to in this document as the Proposed Pipeline Route, Alternative Pipeline Route #1 and Alternative Pipeline Route #2. These alternative routes are being considered due to the presence of the Raven Ridge Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in the Colorado section of the northeast segment of the proposed pipeline project. Once clear of the ACEC these alternative routes converge to a common route on the Utah side of the proposed pipeline project. The attached topographic map, marked Exhibit "A", depicts the various alternative pipeline routes and their points of convergence.

##### **3.1.1 PROPOSED PIPELINE ROUTE**

The proposed pipeline route would entail installing approximately 41,240 linear feet of surface, four inch OD, steel, unpainted, gas pipeline across public land (i.e., 5,000 feet in Colorado and 36,240 feet in Utah) within a 20-foot wide R/W as depicted on the project map marked Exhibit "A". If approved, the R/W grant under this alternative would encompass approximately 18.93 acres, and would be located on portions of the following described public land:

Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado

T. 2 N., R. 104 W.,

Sec. 2, Lots 2 & 3, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;

Sec. 3, Lot

Salt Lake Meridian, Utah

T. 7 S., R. 25 E.,

Sec. 25, Lots 1 & 2, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

T. 8 S., R. 25 E.,

Sec. 1, Lots 1, 3, 4 & 5;

Sec. 12, Lots 1-4;

Sec. 13, Lots 1-4;

Sec. 23, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;

Sec. 24, Lots 1 & 2, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;

Sec. 26, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;

Sec. 34, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;

Sec. 35, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

T. 9 S., R. 25 E.,  
Sec. 3, Lots 1 & 2, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ .

The proposed pipeline project would require six staging areas. Staging Area #1 would measure 150 feet X 150 feet (about 0.52 of an acre) and would be located at the tie-in with an existing gas pipeline lying within the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 2, T. 2N., R. 104W., Rio Blanco County, Colorado. This staging area would be used for temporary pipe storage and pipe rack placement to facilitate welding of sections of pipe.

Another staging area (Staging Area #3) would also measure 150 feet X 150 feet and would be located on non-public land within Sec. 36, T. 7S., R. 25E., Uintah County, Utah. This staging area would be located at the junction of a two track trail and the proposed pipeline route. This area would also be used for temporary pipe storage and welding of sections of pipe.

The next two staging areas, Staging Areas #4 & #5, would each measure approximately 150 feet X 150 feet (about 0.52 X 2 = 1.04 acres) and would be located public land on the north and south side of the existing railroad tracks, which are authorized under R/W grant, serial number UTU-45319 issued to Blue Mountain Energy in the early 1980's, within Sec. 12, T. 8S., R. 25E., Uintah County, Utah. These areas would be used to install horizontal boring equipment needed to bury the pipeline beneath the railroad R/W. A backhoe would be used to dig a 10 feet X 20 feet X 6 feet trench on the north side and a similar trench would be dug on the south side of the tracks to allow placement of a horizontal boring device into the trench. American Warrior or their contractor would drill a 10 inch or 12 inch hole under the tracks and line it with a steel pipe through which the proposed 4 inch OD gas pipeline would be installed and buried.

Staging Area #6 would measure about 200 feet X 200 feet (about 0.92 of an acre) and would be located on public land within Sec. 24, T. 8S., R. 25E., Uintah County, Utah. This staging area would be located at the junction of an improved highway and near the Utah-Colorado state line and would also be used for temporary pipe storage and welding of sections of pipe.

The final staging area, Staging Area #7, which is currently fenced, would measure about 100 feet X 100 feet (about 0.23 of an acre) and would be located on public land within Sec. 3, T. 9S., R. 25E., Uintah County, Utah. This staging area would be located at the tie-in at an existing gas transmission line in a fenced-in location. This area would also be used for temporary pipe storage, valves and fittings with construction-related activity confined to the fenced in area.

Approximately 3.23 acres of public land would be disturbed by these staging areas under the proposed pipeline route.

### **3.1.2 ALTERNATIVE PIPELINE ROUTE #1**

This alternative proposed pipeline route would entail installing approximately 46,240 linear feet of surface, unpainted, steel, pipeline across public land (i.e., 5,000 feet in Colorado and 41,240 feet in Utah) within a 20-foot wide R/W as depicted on the project map marked Exhibit "A". If approved, the R/W grant under this alternative would encompass approximately 21.23 acres, and would be located on portions of the following described public land:

Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado  
T. 2 N., R. 104 W.,  
Sec. 2, Lots 2 & 3.

T. 3 N., R. 104 W.,  
Sec. 34, Lots 3 & 4;  
Sec. 35, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

Salt Lake Meridian, Utah  
T. 7 S., R. 25 E.,  
Sec. 25, Lots 2, 3 & 4, W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

The remainder of the proposed alternative #1 pipeline would use the same southerly route described under the proposed pipeline alternative and as depicted on the map marked Exhibit "A".

Under this alternative route, Staging Areas #3 through #7 as described under the proposed pipeline alternative would still be used in addition to another staging area, Staging Area #2, measuring approximately 150 feet X 150 feet (encompassing about 0.52 of an acre) and located near/under the power lines within Sec. 25, T. 7S., R. 25E., Uintah County, Utah. This proposed staging area may be used to store small sections of pipe and as a staging area to weld and pull sections of pipe. According to the applicant's agent, this area may only be used if the first staging area, Staging Area #1, described above proved unsatisfactory for staging all work on the north side of Raven Ridge. This analysis should assume disturbance would occur for purposes of resource impact mitigation as needed.

Approximately 3.75 acres of public land would be affected by the staging areas described under this alternative pipeline route.

### **3.1.3 ALTERNATIVE PIPELINE ROUTE #2**

This alternative proposed pipeline route would entail installing approximately 42,240 linear feet of surface unpainted, steel, pipeline across public land (i.e., 6,000 feet in Colorado and 36,240 feet in Utah) within a 20-foot wide R/W as depicted on the project map marked Exhibit "A". If approved, the R/W grant under this alternative would encompass approximately 19.39, and would be located on portions of the following described public land:

Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado

T. 2 N., R. 104 W.,

Sec. 2, Lot 4;

Sec. 3, Lot 1.

T. 3 N., R. 104 W.,

Sec. 35, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

Salt Lake Meridian, Utah

T. 7 S., R. 25 E.,

Sec. 25, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

The remaining pipeline would continue its proposed southerly route (i.e., from the north border line of Sec 1, T. 8 S., R. 25 E. to the terminus of the proposed pipeline project in Sec. 3, T. 9 S., R. 25 E.) and is the same as described under the alternative route #1.

Under this alternative route, the five staging areas described in detail under the proposed pipeline route alternative would also be required. In addition, another staging area would need to be located along this alternative. This staging area would measure approximately 150 feet X 150 feet (about 0.52 of an acre) and would be located near/under existing power transmission lines and at the junction of an lines within the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 35, T. 1N., R. 104W., Rio Blanco County, Colorado. This proposed staging area may be used as described under Alternative Route #1. This analysis should assume disturbance would occur for purposes of resource impact mitigation as needed.

Approximately 3.75 acres of public land would be affected by the staging areas described under the proposed pipeline route.

### **3.2 Construction/Installation Operations Applicable to All Pipeline Routes**

The following construction/installation operations would apply to all of the pipeline routes described in this document. Access to the proposed pipeline project would be via existing service roads. No new road construction would be required. The project is expected to take about two weeks to complete with a maximum number of 12 workers on-site. Work crews would car pool to the project site. Three one ton trucks, two welding trucks, two D8 dozers, and two backhoes with 24" buckets would comprise the equipment on-site. Tractor-trailers using existing roads would haul pipe to the site.

The surface pipeline would be welded as described in the above narrative concerning the staging areas. The welded sections of pipe would be pulled down the proposed R/W with a cat or backhoe. The operator would confine surface disturbance to previously disturbed areas as much as possible. The pipeline would be buried 30 feet on either side of two track trails or improved road crossings to a depth of approximately four feet. The trench would be about 24 " wide. All such access routes would be restored to their original condition. The line would be bedded if rock is encountered. The bedding material would be obtained from a private source and trucked to the project site as needed.

Portable chemical toilets would be set up at each of the staging areas. Trash would be removed daily from the project site by welders and roustabouts. Trash would be returned to the contractors shop and disposed of at an authorized disposal site.

The completed surface pipeline would not require hydrostatic testing.

When the proposed pipeline is no longer needed or upon grant termination by the BLM, The holder of this grant or their successor would expose and cut off all buried lines. All surface lines would be removed. Prior to initiating removal and initiating reclamation operations, the holder or assignee would arrange an on-site meeting with the BLM to ensure removal and reclamation would conform with BLM regulations and requirements.

### **3.4 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under this alternative the BLM would not approve American Warrior's application for a R/W grant, thereby requiring the applicant to submit another application for a different pipeline route or adopt other means for transporting produced gas from the wells. The wells intended to be hooked up to the pipeline would not be able to produce, therefore, no production would mean a loss of revenue to the operator, the Federal government, the States of Colorado and Utah and the local economy. There may also be an effect to the oil/gas reservoir from having the wells shut-in. A reservoir over time

may require stimulation in order to produce in the future should a pipeline be approved at some future date. Apart from the economic impact described above, present resource trends and land use practices would be continued.

## **4. CONFORMANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAND USE PLAN**

### **4.1 Conformance with BLM Land Use Plans**

If approved, a decision to authorize additional surface pipelines would be tiered to and in conformance with the following referenced land use plans: The Book Cliffs Resource Management Plan (RMP) approved on June 3, 1985, and the White River Record of Decision and RMP approved on July 1, 1997. The Book Cliffs RMP was reviewed to determine if the proposed action conforms with the land use plan's terms and conditions as required by Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 1610.5. The proposed actions would be consistent with the management prescriptions for mineral resource management and issuance of R/W grants ancillary to minerals development as described on Page 28 of the Book Cliffs Resource Area RMP/EIS & Record of Decision.

The White River RMP was also reviewed to determine if the proposed action conforms terms and conditions of the Meeker Office's land use plan. The proposed actions would be consistent with the management prescription to make federal oil and gas resources available for development in a manner that provides reasonable protection for other resource values as described on Page 2-5 of the White River Record of Decision and Approved RMP.

### **4.2 Consistency with Other Agency Plans**

The proposed surface gas pipeline and development of oil/gas is consistent with the land use plan for Rio Blanco County, Colorado and Uintah County, Utah. The plans for these counties contain policy statements addressing public land, multiple-use, resource use and development, access, and wildlife management. In general, these local plans support development proposals, such as the proposed action in this EA, through emphasis on multiple-use public land management practices and responsible use and optimum utilization of public land resources. These plans support the development of natural resources as they become available or as new technology allows.

There are no comprehensive State of Colorado or State of Utah plans for the vicinity of the proposed action. Much of the state lands in the vicinity of the proposed action are leased for oil and gas production by the State of Colorado and Utah. Because the state agencies objectives are to produce funding for the state through production on Federal leases which would also affect interest in drilling on state leases in the area, it is assumed that the proposed action is consistent with the objectives of both states.

## 5. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

### 5.1 CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

The following environmental elements were reviewed to determine if analysis in this EA would be required. After careful consideration, it was determined these elements would not be affected by the proposed action or any of the alternatives:

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED	
ELEMENT	RATIONALE
Air Quality	Compressor stations are not proposed. Minimum quantity of dust emissions are anticipated because of the scope and method of surface installation of the proposed pipeline and volume of traffic for this proposal would be less than 1 or 2 vehicles/day during installation operations.
Environmental Justice	No minority or economically disadvantaged communities or populations are present which could be affected by the proposed action or alternatives.
Farmlands, Prime/Unique	None present.
Flood plains	None present.
Hazardous Wastes	No chemicals subject to SARA Title III in amounts <10,000 lbs. No extremely hazardous substances as defined in 40CFR355 in threshold planning quantities would be used.
Native American Religious Concerns	There are no known issues of concern to the Northern Ute Tribe.
Native American Trust Assets	None exist within the proposed action.
Water Quality , Surface & Ground	Surface: No lotic systems are present on or adjacent to the proposed action. Ground: Waters are not impacted because of the surface installation of the proposed pipelines.
Livestock Grazing	Given the scope, duration, and limited disturbance associated with the proposed project, the grazing program would not be affected under any of the alternatives.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED	
ELEMENT	RATIONALE
Paleontology	None present or recorded during the field survey conducted on August 23 and September 12, 2002.
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	None present.
Wild & Scenic Rivers	None present.
Wilderness	No designated Wilderness Areas or WSAs are present.

## 5.2 AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC)

The Proposed Pipeline Route and the Alternative Route #2 pass through public land within a designated ACEC (i.e., the Raven Ridge ACEC) in the Colorado portion of the proposed pipeline project. The portion of the ACEC in the project area is depicted on the attached map marked Exhibit B. Alternative Route #1 is not within the ACEC.

Raven Ridge was designated an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in 1985. The joint Articles of Designation between BLM and the Colorado Natural Areas Program were signed in 1986, designating the Raven Ridge ACEC a Colorado Natural Area. Raven Ridge ACEC is described in Table 2-15, page D-35 of the White River Record of Decision and Approved RMP. According to Table 2-15, Raven Ridge was designated as an ACEC because it contains "Candidate T/E [threatened or endangered] plants, sensitive plants, and remnant vegetation associations (RVA). Table A-1, page A-6 of this document prescribes no surface occupancy stipulations for this ACEC: "Surface occupancy or disturbance will not be allowed within the boundaries of the ACEC." It further states, "The area manager may grant an exception to this stipulation if, after an on the ground plant inventory is conducted, an environmental analysis indicates that the nature or conduct of the action, as proposed, or conditioned, would not directly or indirectly affect the identified important values of the ACEC."

No ACECs are identified in the Utah portion of the proposed pipeline route or any of the alternative routes described in this document. No further analysis is required for this resource issue as it pertains to public land in Utah.

## 5.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

On August 23<sup>rd</sup> and September 12, 2002, field inventories were completed by BLM archaeologists from the White River Field Office for the northern-most portions of the proposed and alternative pipeline routes. The BLM inventories supplemented a

previous cultural clearance by Sagebrush Consultants, LLC from Ogden, Utah, which was prepared in September of 2001 for the American Warrior's proposed pipeline route. All inventories were completed as required and guided by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), and in accordance with the regulatory guidance of 36CFR Part 800 and BLM Manual 8100 and 8110.

Sagebrush Consultant's survey of the proposed pipeline route found two new cultural resource sites (42UN3009 and 5RB4515) and one isolated find. The 42UN3009 site is a segment of a historic livestock driveway and is recommended eligible to the National Register of Historic places. The 5RB4515 site is a campsite and lithic scatter. This site is also recommended eligible to the National Register of Historic places due to the number of prehistoric flakes on-site. No previously discovered eligible or National Register sites are located within the project area boundaries for the proposed and alternative pipeline routes.

Two newly discovered cultural sites were recorded in close proximity to the proposed Alternative #2 pipeline route. These two sites (42UN3152 and 42UN3153) are open lithic scatters on either side of an unnamed erosional channel at the approximate mid-point of the survey route. These sites do not appear to meet the standards of significance as listed in 36CFR 60.4(d) and are considered to be ineligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Two isolated finds assigned the temporary identification numbers of 08/23/02/02 and 09/12/02/01 were discovered and recorded during the survey. These finds are considered to be ineligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

#### 5.4 SOILS/WATERSHED

The soils on the Colorado side of the project have been mapped by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS, 1982) in an order III soils survey. The proposed routes intersect soil mapping unit numbers 19, 66, and 99. See Table below.

Mapping Unit #	Soil Name	Slope	Hydrologic group	Range Site	Fragile	Saline
19	Chipeta-Walknolls Complex	5 - 15 %	D	Clayey Saltdesert/ Saltdesert Breaks	no	yes
66	Potts-Begay fine sandy loams	2 - 7 %	B	Sandy Saltdesert/ Loamy Saltdesert	no	no

Mapping Unit #	Soil Name	Slope	Hydrologic group	Range Site	Fragile	Saline
91	Torriorthents-Rock Outcrop complex	5 - 90 %	Not Rated	Sandy Foothills	yes, on slopes > 35%	no

The semi-arid climate found in the watershed has affected soil development. Lack of moisture, cool nights, and infrequent high temperatures suppress vegetation growth and slow the chemical and biological processes needed for good soil development. In addition, geologic erosion has progressed too rapidly for soils to develop distinct deep horizons.

The White River Resource Area Resource Management Plan identifies soils that are fragile within the resource area. These soils have slopes greater than 35% and exhibit the following criteria; 1) Areas rated as highly or severely erodible by wind or water, as described by the NRCS is area soil survey reports or as described by onsite inspections. 2) Areas with slopes greater than 35 percent, if they have one of the following soil characteristics: (a) a surface texture that is sand, loamy sand, very fine sandy loam, fine sandy loam, silty clay or clay, (b) a depth to bedrock that is less than 20 inches, c) an erosion condition that is rated as poor and (d) a K (erosion potential) factor greater than 0.32.

Fragile watersheds that have a very high erosion potential (i.e. Dripping Rock) are frequently high in salts and can contribute to increased salinity loads to the White River and the Colorado River Basin. Annual runoff is dynamic and dependent on some aspects we control, such as the amount of vegetation retained for watershed protection and vegetation density. Depleting this vegetation cover, which is needed to protect watersheds from raindrop impact and runoff, could cause long-term erosion and water quality problems for Dripping Rock and on downstream. Best management practices (e.g., re-contouring disturbed areas, installing erosion control measures, re-seeding, etc.) need to be used to re-establish a protective vegetative cover and to collect sediment during runoff events.

The proposed project lies within Dripping Rock watershed which is tributary to the White River. This watershed is generally a lower elevation, semi-arid stream, that is intermittent, having segments of perennial flow near springs, or is ephemeral and flows during spring runoff and intense summer storms. Annual runoff varies due to soils, vegetation, watershed aspect and slope, precipitation and temperature. There is limited surface water quality data available for Dripping Rock.

The Colorado Department of Health, Water quality Control Commission, has adopted (Colorado Department of Health 1991) basic standards and an anti-degradation rule for all surface waters in the resource area. These standards reflect the ambient water quality and define maximum allowable concentrations for various water quality parameters. The State has classified this segment as a "Use Protected" reach. It's designated beneficial uses are: Warm Aquatic Life 2, Recreation 1b, and Agriculture. The anti-degradation review requirements in the Anti-degradation Rule, are not applicable to waters designated use-protected. For those waters, only the protection specified in each reach will apply. For this reach, minimum standards for four parameters have been listed. These parameters are: dissolved oxygen = 5.0 mg/l, pH = 6.5 - 9.0 and Fecal Coliform = 325/100ml and 205/100 ml E. coli standard.

The Utah portion of the proposed project area is comprised of two major soil types. The Solirec sandy loam soils is deep and well drained. Runoff is medium, and the hazard of water erosion is moderate. The Walknolls very channery loam is shallow and well drained. Runoff is rapid, and the hazard of water erosion is high.

## 5.5 BOTANICAL RESOURCES/SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES

The Raven Ridge ACEC contains a unique assemblage of endemic plants. Seven species of rare endemic plants found on Raven Ridge are on the Colorado Natural Heritage Inventory's list of plant species of special concern and are BLM sensitive species. Two of the seven are candidates for federal listing as threatened or endangered.

The following table lists the species of concern:

SPECIES	COMMON NAME	FEDERAL STATUS	STATE LIST
<i>Aquilegia bamebyi</i>	Shale Columbine		4
<i>Cryptantha rollinsii</i>	Rollins Cat's Eye		2
<i>Eriogonum ephedroides</i>	Ephedra Buckwheat		2
<i>Parthenium liqulatum</i>	Ligulate Feverfew		2
<i>Penstemon scariosus</i> var. <i>albifluvis</i>	White River Penstemon	C	1
<i>Penstemon grahamii</i>	Graham Beardtongue	C	1
<i>Phacelia incana</i>	Hoary Phacelia		3

Federal Status (Endangered Species Act)

C = Candidate for Listing

State List (Colorado Plant Species of Special Concern)

List 1 = Federal Threatened or Endangered and Species that are Rare Throughout Their Range

List 2 = Species Which are Rare in Colorado but Relatively Common Elsewhere Within Their Range

List 3 = Species Which Appear to be Rare but for Which Conclusive Information is Lacking

List 4 = Species of Limited Distribution or of Special Interest

The seven plant species of concern all occur on the shale/marlsstone barrens/semi-barrens of the Green River Formation. Exposures of the Green River Formation extend the length of the Raven Ridge ACEC disappearing beneath the surface very near the Utah state line.

In Utah, four species of plants listed for the Vernal Field office as Special Status Plants, have potential habitat in the area due to the Geological formations and associated soils.

SPECIES	COMMON NAME	STATUS
<i>Astragalus hamiltonii</i>	Hamilton milkvetch	SENSITIVE
<i>Penstemon grahamii</i>	Graham Beardtongue	CANDIDATE FOR LISTING

<i>Penstemon scariosus</i> var. <i>albifluvis</i>	White River Penstemon	CANDIDATE FOR LISTING
<i>Scerocactus glaucus</i>	Uintah Basin hookless cactus	THREATENED

A survey was conducted on May 29, 2002 on the Utah portion of the proposed pipeline routes. There were no populations of these species found on any of these pipeline routes .

## 5.6 WILDLIFE & SENSITIVE ANIMAL SPECIES

Within the Colorado portion of the pipeline project, extensive prairie dog colonies exist to the north of County Road 99, and out of the area of pipeline construction. However, no prairie dogs were observed south of the road in the project area following field visits by BLM biologists. No raptor nests were observed during a thorough field examination that encompassed the land area within all three alternatives. The project area is outside the designated severe winter range for big game, and is over a quarter-mile from the nearest sage grouse lek. The proposed pipeline route as well as the alternative routes described in this document would not affect wildlife resources in Colorado.

Within the Utah portion of the pipeline project, the proposed pipeline route as well as the alternative routes described in this document contain marginal winter habitat for mule deer and the southern section of the route, after it enters Coyote Basin, crosses crucial, year-long, pronghorn habitat.

The public land south of the proposed Staging Area #3 location all the way to the terminus of the proposed pipeline route at Walsh Knolls contains white-tailed prairie dog colonies and is habitat for golden eagles, nesting habitat for ferruginous hawks, a state endangered species, burrowing owl, and the black-footed ferret. The burrowing owl is a State of Utah Species of Special Concern, because of its declining population and the black-footed ferret is a State and Federally listed endangered species. The ferret, in this area, is classified as a Proposed for Listing species under provisions of Section 10 (j) of the Endangered Species Act. The proposed pipeline would cross over nine miles of the Primary Management Zone designated for the re-introduction of the black-footed ferret. Over 200 ferrets have been released in the management zone since 1999. No activities would be allowed within 1/8 mile boundaries of known home ranges of female ferrets during "critical" period from May 1<sup>st</sup> thru July 15<sup>th</sup>. "Critical" period is defined as the period between birth and emergence of young. There is one known ferret home range within an 1/8 mile of the proposed project.

The White River is located approximately three miles south of the pipeline tie-in and it contains critical habitat for the Colorado pikeminnow. Razorback suckers may also be

found in this section of the river. These endangered fish would not be affected by the proposed project because of the distance to the river and the limited amount of additional sedimentation that would be expected from the surface pipeline

## **5.7 RECREATION & VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

the proposed pipeline and alternative pipeline routes in Colorado are within a visual resource management (VRM) Class 3 area. The definition for this VRM class states that the action shall not dominate the new landscape. In Utah, these pipeline routes are within a VRM Class IV area. The definition for this VRM class states that changes may attract attention.

## **5.8 INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE PLANT SPECIES/RECLAMATION**

Cheatgrass and halogeton are the most prevalent and problematic invasive species in the general area of the proposed pipeline alternatives in both Colorado and Utah. Several other species of non-native annual forbs occur in the general area but do not present a invasive problem. The project including the alternate routes consist of two principal plant communities, sagebrush/grass shrub lands and juniper woodlands, and a pipeline R/W which have been successfully reclaimed with perennial grasses. In Colorado, that portion of the proposed pipeline in common to all the alternatives would be adjacent to an existing pipeline that was successfully reclaimed with perennial grass species and is not threatened by any invasive species. The same is true for alternate route #1. The proposed route after leaving the point common to the other pipeline route alternatives crosses sagebrush/grass shrublands and juniper woodlands that are undisturbed and are in a very healthy condition. These communities are not being threatened by invasive species. The alternate route #2 follows a 345kv powerline across a sagebrush/grass shrubland community that is in a very healthy condition. Very little disturbance was associated with construction of the powerline along this route, including a two track road paralleling the powerline. This route is not being threatened by invasive species.

## **5.9 NOXIOUS WEEDS**

No noxious weeds that are on the State of Colorado's or the Rio Blanco County's or the State of Utah's noxious weed lists occur in the general area of the project.

## **5.10 LANDS STATUS/REALTY**

The proposed pipeline project and alternative routes would cross or follow R/W grants issued in the Colorado area: Canyon Gas' pipeline R/W, COC-17801; Northwest Pipeline's (NWP) 26" (Ignacio-Sumas) pipeline R/W, COC-011243; MAPCO/Williams pipeline R/W, COC-29266 & COC-62466; Chevron's CO2 pipeline R/W, COC-37784; Western Area Power Administration's (WAPA) power line R/W, COC-40644. The proposed pipeline and alternatives would cross or follow the following R/W grants in

the Utah area: Moon Lake's power line R/W, UTU-05579; Chevron's gas pipeline R/W, UTU-54789, NWP's gas/oil pipeline R/W, UTU-015664; WAPA's power line R/W, UTU-0144547; Blue Mountain Energy's railroad R/W, UTU-45319; and MAPCO/Williams R/W, UTU-43521.

## **6. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

### **6.1 Proposed Pipeline Route**

#### **6.1.1 Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)**

The proposed pipeline route crosses about 3/4 mile of the Raven Ridge ACEC in Colorado. Most of this route is undisturbed sagebrush/grass shrub lands and juniper woodlands where it crosses Raven Ridge then follows a little-used two track jeep trail through sagebrush/grass shrub lands. This route has not been inventoried for the presence of the important botanical and paleontological values of the ACEC. It is likely that these resources could be encountered along this route and could be adversely impacted by the proposed project.

*Mitigating Measures: The proposed route that is within the ACEC is subject to a no surface occupancy stipulation. The authorized officer may grant an exception to this stipulation if, after an on the ground plant inventory is conducted, an environmental analysis indicates that the nature or conduct of the action, as proposed, or conditioned, would not directly or indirectly affect the identified important values of the ACEC. Until an approved inventory is completed for this route, a determination can not be made, thus this route will retain the no surface occupancy stipulation.*

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.*

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.*

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.*

#### **6.1.2 Cultural Resources**

Site 5RB4515, a campsite and lithic scatter, is approximately 200 to 300 feet west of the proposed surface pipeline route. The aged signs associated with Site 42UN3009, Utah-Colorado Stock Driveway, are at least a quarter mile south and east of the proposed pipeline route. While these sites would be outside of the proposed pipeline installation corridor, the potential for additional discovery during pipeline installation/construction is enough to warrant mitigation as described below.

*Mitigating Measures:* If, in its operations, American Warrior or its contractor, discovers any previously unidentified historic or prehistoric cultural resources, then work in the vicinity of the discovery will be suspended and the discovery promptly reported to BLM Vernal Field Office. BLM will then specify what action is to be taken. If there is an approved "discovery plan" in place for the project, then the plan will be executed. In the absence of an approved plan, BLM will evaluate the significance of the discovery and consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer in accordance with 36 CFR Section 800.11. Minor recordation, stabilization or data recovery may be performed by BLM or a permitted cultural resources consultant. If warranted, more extensive treatment by a permitted cultural resources consultant may be required of the operator/holder prior to allowing the project to proceed. Further damage to significant cultural resources will not be allowed until any required treatment is successfully completed. Failure to notify BLM about a discovery may result in civil or criminal penalties in accordance with the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (as amended).

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts:* None.

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity:* None.

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources:* Any archaeological resources damaged or destroyed during construction would be an irreversible and or irretrievable loss of scientific resources.

### **6.1.3 Soils/watershed**

In Colorado, this route has the potential to disturb the largest amount of saline soils. Saline soils are also considered to be fragile and have been mapped in the White River Resource Area RMP.

*Mitigating Measures:* Soils that are considered fragile on slopes greater than 35% fall under Controlled Surface Use (CSU) Stipulation 1 in Table A-1, Appendix A of the White River Record of Decision and Approved RMP. CSU-1 requires detailed soil testing be done and a reclamation plan developed.

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts:* None.

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity:* None.

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources:* None.

In Utah, installation of the surface line is not expected to increase soil erosion rates in the project area due to the overall lack of surface disturbance. However, if construction occurs during times of saturated soil conditions, then the potential for rutting from construction equipment becomes quite high. Rutting and disturbance of wet soils could lead to increased soil erosion in the future. The degree of potential erosion would depend upon site specific instances such as slope, vegetative cover and other factors. Disturbance of approximately 3.23 acres of land for the staging areas would result in the loss of the existing vegetative cover, and subsequent loss of soil, mostly through wind erosion.

*Mitigating Measures:* *The impacts from operating during times of saturated soils could be mitigated by not allowing any construction equipment/vehicles to operate off road during times of saturated soil conditions.*

*The potential loss of soil from disturbance at the staging areas could be mitigated by construction and reclamation measures. During construction of the staging areas, the top six inches of soil would be graded and stockpiled/windrowed along the edge of the staging areas for re-distribution during site reclamation. Immediately after the pipeline project is completed, all disturbed areas would be re-contoured, topsoil re-distributed and the disturbed areas re-seeded with the same seed mixture specified in Section 6.1.7 of this document.*

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts:* *None*

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity:* *Given the scope and duration of the project and the mitigation measures described in this part and in Section 6.1.7. of this document, the short-term use would have minimal to no effect on long-term soil productivity.*

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources:* *None.*

#### **6.1.4 Botanical Resources/sensitive Plant Species**

The proposed route crosses the Raven Ridge ACEC in Colorado at about the northern extent of the Green River Formation which is habitat for the seven special status plant species occurring in the ACEC. This route has not been inventoried for the presence or absence of any sensitive species. It is likely that this route could encounter some of these species causing an adverse impact to those within the construction area.

The two alternate routes do not cross any habitats suitable for the seven sensitive plant species occurring on Raven Ridge. Both routes have previously been

inventoried for these species prior to construction of the MAPCO pipeline in the case of route #1 and the WAPA 345kv power line in the case of route #2. Neither inventory encountered any of the seven sensitive plant species nor their suitable habitats. No impacts are anticipated to any of these species along route #1 or route #2.

*Mitigating Measures:* The proposed route would have to have an approved inventory completed prior to any construction activities taking place (refer to mitigation required under the ACEC section above). If any exposures of the Green River Formation are (suitable habitat for the seven sensitive plant species) or any of these species found within a 200 foot corridor encompassing the proposed pipeline, the pipeline and associated construction activities would be required to relocate for complete avoidance.

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts:* With mitigation, no adverse impacts are anticipated.

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity:* Long-term productivity is not expected to be affected.

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources:* None.

A plant survey of the Utah portion of the proposed route on May 29, 2002 showed that no special status plant species listed for the Vernal Field Office occur within the portions of the pipeline route in Utah. The pipeline will have 'No Affect' to special status plant species in Utah.

*Mitigating Measures:* None.

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts:* None.

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity:* None.

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources:* None.

#### **6.1.5 Wildlife & Sensitive Animal Species**

The staging areas associated with the proposed pipeline project would disturb approximately 3.23 acres of wildlife habitat under the proposed pipeline route, 3.75 acres for alternate route #1, and 3.75 acres for alternate route #2.

*Mitigating Measures:* The loss of wildlife habitat would be mitigated by re-contouring and re-seeding all of the disturbed areas. In addition, impacts to wildlife species would

*be mitigated through application of seasonal restrictions as described below.*

*No construction activities would be allowed for the entire length of the pipeline route during the birthing period for antelope from May 15<sup>th</sup> through June 20<sup>th</sup>.*

*No construction activities would be allowed within the N½ of Sec. 24, T. 8 S., R. 25 E., Salt Lake Meridian, during the ferruginous hawk nesting season from March 1<sup>st</sup> through July 15<sup>th</sup>.*

*No construction activities would be allowed within the Black-footed Ferret Management Area (i.e., those portions of the pipeline route through Sections 1, 12, 13, 23, 24, 26, 34, 35, T. 8 S., R. 25 E., and Sec. 3. T. 9 S., R. 25 E., Salt Lake Meridian), during the burrowing owl nesting season of April 1<sup>st</sup> through August 15<sup>th</sup>.*

*No construction activities would be allowed within the E½SE¼ of Sec. 34, the NW¼SW¼ of Sec. 35, T. 8 S., R. 25 E., Salt Lake Meridian, during the golden eagle nesting season of February 1<sup>st</sup> through July 15<sup>th</sup>.*

*No construction activities would be allowed within the Black-footed Ferret Management area (described above) during the critical birthing period for ferrets from May 1<sup>st</sup> through July 15<sup>th</sup>.*

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.*

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.*

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.*

#### **6.1.6 Recreation Visual Resource Management**

While surface disturbance and visibility of the surface pipeline will have a minimal impact to visual quality of the area, this is acceptable under both the Colorado and Utah VRM Classifications.

*Mitigating Measures: The applicant would not paint the pipeline. This would allow the surface of the pipeline to rust which will blend well with the natural environment.*

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.*

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.*

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.*

#### **6.1.7 Invasive, Non-Native Species/Reclamation**

Surface disturbance associated with construction could provide a suitable area for invasive species to establish, gain a foothold and invade nearby undisturbed areas which are currently not affected by invasive species. With successful reclamation of disturbed areas, invasive species are not likely to impact the healthy native plant communities within the project area. Past disturbances of larger extent than this

project have been successfully reclaimed preventing invasive species from impacting adjacent plant communities.

*Mitigating Measures:* Surface disturbances would require re-seeding with the following native species at the prescribe pure live seed (pls) rate per acre:

<i>Indian Ricegrass</i>	<i>2 lb/ac</i>
<i>Needle and Thread grass</i>	<i>1 lb/ac</i>
<i>Western Wheatgrass</i>	<i>2 lb/ac</i>
<i>Beardless Blue Bunch Wheatgrass</i>	<i>2 lb/ac</i>
<i>Fourwing Saltbush</i>	<i>1 lb/ac</i>
<i>Winterfat</i>	<i>1 lb/ac</i>
<i>Utah sweetvetch</i>	<i>1 lb/ac</i>

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts:* With successful reclamation, none are anticipated.

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity:* Long-term productivity is not expected to be affected.

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources:* None.

#### **6.1.8 Noxious Weeds**

Construction equipment and vehicles are renowned transporters of noxious weeds. It is likely that construction activities could inadvertently transport a noxious weed species into an area currently unaffected. Noxious weeds within the project area could put healthy native plant communities including habitats for sensitive plant species at risk of invasion.

*Mitigating Measures:* Applicant will clean all construction equipment and vehicles used in the construction and reclamation of the project prior to transport to the project area. The permit holder will be required to control any noxious weeds and/or invasive, non-native plant species occurring within their right-of-way. The holder would be required to follow stipulations contained in the White River RMP on page B-17 and B-18: #173, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188.

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts:* None.

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity:* None.

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources:* None.

### **6.1.9 Land Status/Realty**

The proposed and alternative surface pipeline routes would cross or follow several existing right-of-way grants as described in paragraph 5.11.

*Mitigating Measures: Standard pipeline stipulations need to be applied. Also the applicant must utilize the Colorado One-Call (1-800-922-1987 for portions of the project in Colorado and Utah Blue Stakes of Utah, Utility Notification Center (1-800-662-4111) before construction takes place. Federal law now in effect states that any person who engages in excavation activities without first using an available one-call notification system to determine locations of underground facilities; or without heeding location information of markings and subsequently damages a pipeline facility shall be subject to a fine, imprisonment, or both. The law also states that OSHA may be notified of any accident caused by an excavator”.*

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.*

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.*

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.*

## **6.2 Alternative Pipeline Route #1**

### **6.2.1 Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)**

The alternate route #1 avoids the ACEC and would not impact the important botanical and paleontological values of the ACEC.

*Mitigating Measures: None.*

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.*

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.*

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.*

### **6.2.2 Cultural Resources**

The two cultural sites (Sites 42UN3152 and 42UN3153) described under the Affected Environment portion of this here EA are close to and on either side of the proposed

Alternative #1 pipeline route within the southwest corner of Sec. 25 and northwest corner of Sec. 36, T. 7 S., R. 25 E., Salt Lake Meridian, Uintah County, Utah. Installing the surface pipeline in the near vicinity of these sites could potentially damage unseen cultural resources. The same would apply for the two isolated finds located about a quarter mile south of the 42UN3152 site and about a half mile further south. While these sites would be outside of the pipeline installation corridor, the proximity of these sites to the project under this alternative route heightens the potential for additional discovery during pipeline installation/construction and is enough to warrant mitigation as described below.

Mitigating Measures: *The same as described in paragraph 6.1.2.*

Mitigating Measures: *None.*

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: *None.*

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: *Any archaeological resources damaged or destroyed during construction would be an irreversible and or irretrievable loss of scientific resources.*

### **6.2.3 Soils/watershed**

The staging areas for this proposed alternative pipeline route would disturb approximately 3.75 acres of soils. The impacts would be similar to other surface disturbing activity such as, removing the protective vegetation and exposing the soil surface to runoff and wind erosion. These impacts would continue until successful re-vegetation occurs.

Mitigating Measures: *Sedimentation barriers would be constructed to slow runoff, allow deposition of sediment, and prevent it from leaving these sites. In addition, straining or filtration mechanisms would also contribute to sediment removal from runoff.*

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: *None.*

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: *None.*

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: *None.*

### **6.2.4 Botanical Resources/sensitive Plant Species**

Alternate route #1 does not cross any habitats suitable for the seven sensitive plant

species occurring within Colorado's Raven Ridge ACEC area. The route has previously been inventoried for these species prior to construction of the MAPCO pipeline and the inventory did not encounter any of the seven sensitive plant species or their suitable habitats. No impacts are anticipated to any of these species along route #1. An additional plant survey of the Utah portion of the proposed project area for this alternative route was completed on May 29, 2002. The survey revealed that no special status plant species listed for the Vernal Field Office occur within the portions of the pipeline route in Utah. The pipeline will have 'No Affect' to special status plant species in Utah.

*Mitigating Measures: None.*

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.*

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.*

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.*

#### **6.2.5 Wildlife & Sensitive Animal Species**

Impacts the same as described for the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, and irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources are the same as described in paragraph 6.1.5.*

#### **6.2.6 Recreation/Visual Resource Management**

Impacts the same as described for the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, and irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources are the same as described in paragraph 6.1.6.*

#### **6.2.7 Invasive, Non-Native Species/Reclamation**

Impacts the same as described for the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, and irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources are the same as described in paragraph 6.1.7.*

#### **6.2.8 Noxious Weeds**

Impacts the same as described for the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, and Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources as described under paragraph 6.1.8.*

### **6.2.9 Land Status/Realty**

Impacts the same as described for the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources as described in paragraph 6.1.9.*

## **6.3 Alternative Pipeline Route #2**

### **6.3.1 Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)**

The alternate route #2 would cross the ACEC for about 1/4 mile along side an existing 345kv power line which crosses the ACEC. This route follows a two track road through sagebrush/grass shrub lands along side the power line. This route was inventoried for the important botanical and paleontological values of the ACEC. The geologic formations supporting these values are not present along this route, thus none were found during previous inventories. The proposed project is not likely to impact the important values of the ACEC.

*Mitigating Measures: None.*

*Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.*

*Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.*

*Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.*

### **6.3.2 Cultural Resources**

The proximity of the two isolated finds located south of the 42UN3152 site is such that this portion of the alternative route heightens the potential for additional discovery during pipeline installation/construction and is enough to warrant mitigation as described below.

*Mitigating Measures: The same as described in paragraph 6.1.2.*

Mitigating Measures: None.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: Any archaeological resources damaged or destroyed during construction would be an irreversible and or irretrievable loss of scientific resources.

### **6.3.3. Soils/watershed**

Alternate Route #2 has the potential to disturb the largest amount of soils with the two staging areas. Impacts would be similar to other surface disturbing activity such as, removal of the protective vegetation and exposing the soil surface to runoff and wind erosion. These impacts would continue until successful re-vegetation occurs.

Mitigating Measures: The same as described in Section 6.2.3.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

### **6.3.4 Botanical Resources/sensitive Plant Species**

Alternate route #2 does not cross any habitats suitable for the seven sensitive plant species occurring on Raven Ridge. This route was previously inventoried for these species prior to construction of the WAPA 345kv power line. The inventory did not encounter any of the seven sensitive plant species or their suitable habitats. No impacts are anticipated to any of these species. A plant survey of the area on May 29, 2002 showed that no special status plant species listed for the Vernal Field Office occur within the portions of the pipeline route in Utah.

Mitigating Measures: None required.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

### **6.3.5 Wildlife & Sensitive Animal Species**

Impacts the same as described for the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, and irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources are the same as described in paragraph 6.1.5.*

### **6.3.6 Recreation/Visual Resource Management**

Impacts the same as described for the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, and irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources are the same as described in paragraph 6.1.6.*

### **6.3.7 Invasive, Non-Native Species/Reclamation**

Impacts the same as described for the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, and irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources are the same as paragraph 6.1.7.*

### **6.3.8 Noxious Weeds**

Impacts would be similar to those described for the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, and Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources as described under paragraph 6.1.8.*

### **6.3.9 Land Status/Realty**

Same as the proposed route. *Mitigating Measures, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity, Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources as described in paragraph 6.1.9.*

## **6.4 No Action Alternative**

### **6.4.1 Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)**

No impacts would occur to the Raven Ridge ACEC.

Mitigating Measures: None

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: Long-term productivity is not expected to be affected.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

#### **6.4.2 Cultural & Paleontological Resources**

No impacts.

Mitigating Measures: None.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

#### **6.4.3. Soils/watershed**

Impacts are not expected from the no action alternative.

Mitigating Measures: None.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: Long-term productivity is not expected to be affected.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

#### **6.4.4 Botanical Resources/sensitive Plant Species**

No impacts are anticipated to the seven sensitive plant species that occur near the project area.

Mitigating Measures: None

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: Long-term productivity is not expected to be affected.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

#### **6.4.5 Wildlife & Sensitive Animal Species**

No expected adverse impacts.

Mitigating Measures: None

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: Long-term productivity not expected to be affected.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

#### **6.4.6 Recreation/Visual Resource Management**

No impacts.

Mitigating Measures: None.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

#### **6.4.7 Invasive, Non-Native Species/Reclamation**

Annual invasive weeds would still be in the area and would increase or decrease with seasonal moisture and natural disturbance.

Mitigating Measures: None

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

#### **6.4.8 Noxious Weeds**

No impacts.

Mitigating Measures: None.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts: None.

Short-term Use Verses Long-term Productivity: None.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources: None.

#### **6.4.9 Land Status/Realty**

Under the No Action Alternative there would be no impacts, no need for mitigating measures, no unavoidable adverse impacts, no short-term use verses long-term productivity impact, and no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources.

### **7. PERSONS/AGENCIES CONSULTED**

Bill Ryan, Rocky Mountain Consultants  
Colorado Natural Areas Program  
Center for Native Ecosystems

### **8. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Colorado Natural Areas Program (CNAP) was contacted because the proposed action and one alternative involved the Raven Ridge ACEC which the State of Colorado designated a Colorado Natural Area. The CNAP provided their comments on the proposal in a letter dated April 24, 2002 (attached). CNAP felt the proposed route was unsuitable. They also made no recommendation (had any concern) if the one of the two alternative routes was selected as long as the pipeline was confined to existing disturbances.

The Center for Native Ecosystems also provided comments concerning impacts to the ACEC. They essentially voiced concern that the ACEC be avoided entirely.

## **9. INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM MEMBERS**

### BLM Vernal Office Staff

Blaine Phillips, Archaeologist

Bob Specht, Botany, T&E Flora

Kim Bartel, Recreation/Visual Resource Management

Steve Strong, Watershed/Soils

Dixie Sadliar, Wildlife/T&E Fauna

### BLM Meeker Field Office Staff

Penny Brown, Realty Specialist

Rusty Roberts, ACEC, Invasive Species/Reclamation, Weeds, Range Management

Mike Selle, Archaeologist/Paleontology

Glen Klingler, Wildlife/T&E Fauna

Scott Pavey, Environmental Coordinator

Carol Hollowed, Soils/Watershed

Max McCoy, Visual Resource Management

Chris Ham, Recreation

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